

Calling for a balanced, common-sense approach to address the growing threat of invasive species in the Great Lakes region, Rep. Debbie Halvorson (IL-11) joined Senator Dick Durbin, Rep. Judy Biggert, Attorney General Lisa Madigan and other Illinois officials today at the Shedd Aquarium in calling for Chicago-area shipping canal locks to stay open. Officials gathered for a bipartisan Congressional briefing to respond to the lawsuit filed by the state of Michigan, which is demanding the locks be permanently closed.

"Asian carp and other invasive species present a major threat to our area and our lakes, but we must take a balanced, common-sense approach to solving this problem," said Halvorson. "Our vital waterways are too critical to close, and we risk losing local businesses and eliminating jobs for a plan that is not guaranteed to work. The current barriers have proven effective to this point, and we must continue improving them as we seek a way to put an end to the threat."

Halvorson specifically noted the impact on agriculture and food prices the closing of the locks could have, saying "The corn industry alone would need to spend an additional \$500 million on transportation costs if the locks were closed. They'd have to use more trucks to ship their products, and that could mean higher food expenses for families."

Writing in support of keeping the locks open, Halvorson joined Congresswoman Judy Biggert (IL-13) in leading a letter signed by 20 members of the Illinois Congressional Delegation, supporting Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan's efforts to prevent the closure of the canals.

Halvorson also joined Congresswoman Biggert in co-sponsoring H.R. 3173, which would prohibit the importation of the Bighead species of Asian carp into the United States.



*Photo Credit: Shedd Aquarium.*